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CLEVELAND'S NEW ART MUSEUM BUILDING

[The following description of the building has been written for the Bulletin by Mr. Edward Hamilton Bell, whose services the Museum has been so fortunate as to secure for the period preceding the opening of the Museum. Mr. Bell's familiarity with many museums should make his appreciation of the building and its arrangement and equipment particularly gratifying to those who have been responsible for the outcome.]

THE EXTERIOR

The City of Cleveland has been enriched, through the munificence of some of her sons, with a Museum of Art which strikes the impartial beholder as being as complete and perfect as any known to a fairly wide experience of such institutions. So far as the care of the objects to be exhibited is concerned, it may be pronounced perfect. It will hardly be necessary to state that so fortunate an achievement is not due to any one person, but rather to the happy coöperation of many. The Board of Trustees through its Building Committee, the Architects, and the Directorate, may all participate in the satisfaction which rewards successful accomplishment.

The first glimpse of the marble structure through the foliage of Wade Park pleasantly excites the visitor approaching from the heart of the city. These agreeable anticipations are doomed to no diminution as, drawing nearer, the whole of the southern façade is disclosed. It must be admitted that the building, like all newly erected edifices, stands, at present, a little stark and box-like on its recently graded hilltop, but time and judicious planting will soften that and break up the white mass which now is a little startling in our strong American sunlight. However, it has the rare distinction of expressing a purpose and an idea in a really beautiful manner.

No thoughtful observer can fail to perceive at a glance the function of this building, with its tetrastyle Ionic portico, flanked by two long walls, which are relieved at either end by a pair of engaged columns between piers on each of the terminal pavilions. For no other purpose inside the building, could these long walls, without penetrations, be required than that of hanging pictures to be illuminated by a top light. The beauty is obtained by the proportions, which are sensitively felt, and by the contrast between the shadows of the portico and the pavilions and the unrelieved wall spaces between.

CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

At either end of the building, triple windows framed by a repetition of the pavilion motive on the south front, but with the same number of columns as in the portico, tie the two fronts of the building together in the happiest manner; furnishing a connecting link between the monumental treatment of the southern and the simpler, more domestic, aspect of the northern.

The north front, where, for the purposes of the Museum, windows were required, is less original than the other, but has none the less a simple dignity of its own which inspires respect.

THE GROUND STORY

On the ground floor are the administrative and educational departments of the Museum. The entrance to these is on the north side of the building, although this also serves for the admission of the general public approaching from that quarter. To the right of the lobby is joined a commodious lunch-room with its kitchen and pantry. This is accessible even without entering the Museum proper and should prove a pleasant place of refreshment for visitors to the park.

The long foyer continues the lobby almost across the building. To the right a double stairway, in two easy flights, leads up to the garden court, whence the main floor of the Museum is accessible. Opposite the stairway a broad double doorway opens into the lecture-room, capable of seating an audience of 440. The walls and architectural features of the foyer and corridors on this floor are treated with white and grey Italian marble, and in the colour scheme of the lecture-room the same tones predominate, relieved by the green of curtains on the platform stage and at the glazed doors, which produce the effect of windows down either side.

Beyond the lecture-room is a small lobby from which the passenger-elevator opens, and off this lobby is the entrance to the library. An air of studious repose pervades this most agreeable room. One long wall is pierced by windows between which bookcases projecting into the room form six secluded bays. In each of these stands an admirably contrived reading-desk for folios with seats on either side of it. Down the center of the room are tables for the use of readers, who may help themselves to the books in the open shelves round the wall, and yet are all under the supervision of the librarian, who sits in a raised alcove

at one side of the entrance; close at hand is a spacious vault for the safe-keeping of valuable books, manuscripts, etc. At the farther end of the library is the photograph-room, a large, well lighted apartment, where will ultimately be found reproductions of all the important works of art in the world. On the other side of the lecture-room a corridor leads to a comfortable rest-room for ladies and then to a large room, with north light, where it is intended for the present to exhibit prints and engravings. Beyond that is a conference room, next to which is the office of the assistant in charge of the educational activities of the Museum. This communicates with the children's room, a large, light, airy room at the east end of the building.

The western wing on this floor is entirely given over to the administrative offices, and as a rule is secluded from the general visitor.

Before he can enter the building at the receiving door in this wing, the applicant for admission has to pass the inspection of the Superintendent of the building and grounds, or his clerk, whose offices are immediately to the right of the entrance. To the left is a store-room and a large workshop where the necessary work of the institution on cases, furniture, etc., can be carried on. Beyond this is the men's club-room, with lockers for uniforms and a lavatory, which includes a shower-bath. Proceeding past the Superintendent's office we find ourselves in a spacious hall for receiving and delivery. From this a large freight-elevator makes it possible to transport a work of art, no matter what its size, to any floor in the building. This is close to the door of the main storage, which occupies the whole of the centre of this wing under the garden court. This is not merely a safe deposit vault on a huge scale, but equipped with the new Mazda C 2 or "daylight" lamps, perfectly ventilated and kept at an even temperature, forms an excellent study-room for the specialist who may desire to consult such portions of the Museum collections as may be "in reserve," or, for one reason or another, temporarily not on exhibition.

All the most modern devices for caring for art treasures have been installed in this perfectly equipped storehouse, together with some not to be found elsewhere. For instance, among the most cumbrous and difficult art objects to care for in storage are pictures. They take an immense amount of space, and stacked

against a wall, or in wooden racks, as is usually done, cannot be inspected with facility without a tedious process of handling, which not infrequently results in damage to the frames, if not to the paintings themselves.

All this is obviated by a system which the Directorate of The Cleveland Museum of Art has devised and installed here.

A number of screens, made of strong open meshed wire netting, have been hung on overhead tracks, in the bays which open off the centre aisle of the store-room. On these, pictures of any and every size can be easily hung by S-hooks, so that each side of the screen can be thickly covered with paintings. The screens can be readily pulled out for inspection, and any painting unhooked and removed without trouble or risk, its position on the screens being recorded in the card catalogue.

The whole Museum is, of course, of the most modern fire-proof construction, but this store-room is especially safeguarded, being in fact a huge vault fully provided with open and closed shelves—every fitting being of steel.

Returning to the receiving-room, we find, close by, a well equipped renovating-room where the delicate work of caring for works of ancient art of every kind can be carried on by expert hands under the eye of the curators.

We now enter the administrative department, and the first office we come to is that of the Registrar, without whose personal supervision nothing can be taken in or out of the collections. Next him is the staff of clerks and stenographers, while beyond is the Curator and lastly the Director-in-chief. His office most naturally adjoins the meeting-room of the Board of Trustees, where the various committees who directly control the entire institution convene from time to time. Access to this may be obtained through a comfortable alcove waiting-room direct from the foyer of this floor.

THE MAIN OR EXHIBITION STORY

Entering the building by the south portico, where are placed memorial tablets commemorating the munificence of John Huntington and Horace Kelley, we find ourselves in the entrance lobby which opens directly into the rotunda. The prevailing colour of these rooms is due to the use of Gray Canyon sandstone for the construction, relieved by marble columns of

a slightly warmer tone. Immediately facing us is a large square hall, the walls and ceiling of which are coloured to recall the blue and buff of the Colonial uniforms. The present purpose is to devote this hall to the exhibition of works of art, including furniture and other objects of domestic use, of that important period. Turning to the right, we enter a small room where Gothic and Mediæval art will be shown; opening again from this is the long Renaissance gallery, the name of which sufficiently proclaims its use.

The room which succeeds is the first of a series in which paintings will be exhibited by schools, in historic sequence, so far as possible. It has been thought wise to give this room a more decorative treatment than the others. Consequently an attempt has been made, which it may be claimed, with much satisfaction, has proved most successful, to reproduce an apartment in an Italian Palazzo of the Cinquecento. The vaulted ceiling, enriched with ornament and colour, the doorways and surbase of travertine and the cool brown velvet on the walls, produce an impression of dignity and subdued splendour which should greatly enhance the effect of the early paintings which are to hang there for a while. This room was designed by Mr. Arthur Loomis Harmon, of New York, under the supervision of Mr. Henry W. Kent, former Secretary of the Building Committee.

Perhaps this is the place to call attention to the studied simplicity of the colour scheme—it can hardly be called decoration—of the entire building. The Directorate felt very strongly that the function of a museum is to exhibit most effectually and fittingly the objects it is constructed to house, and that therefore the building itself should be treated as a background to the works of art whose exhibition therein is the sole reason for the existence of the structure. From this point of view (the most modern and common-sense one, by the way), the problem resolves itself into deciding on the most suitable and satisfactory background scheme that can be found for the great variety of objects of all periods and from every quarter of the globe which are gathered together in a modern museum.

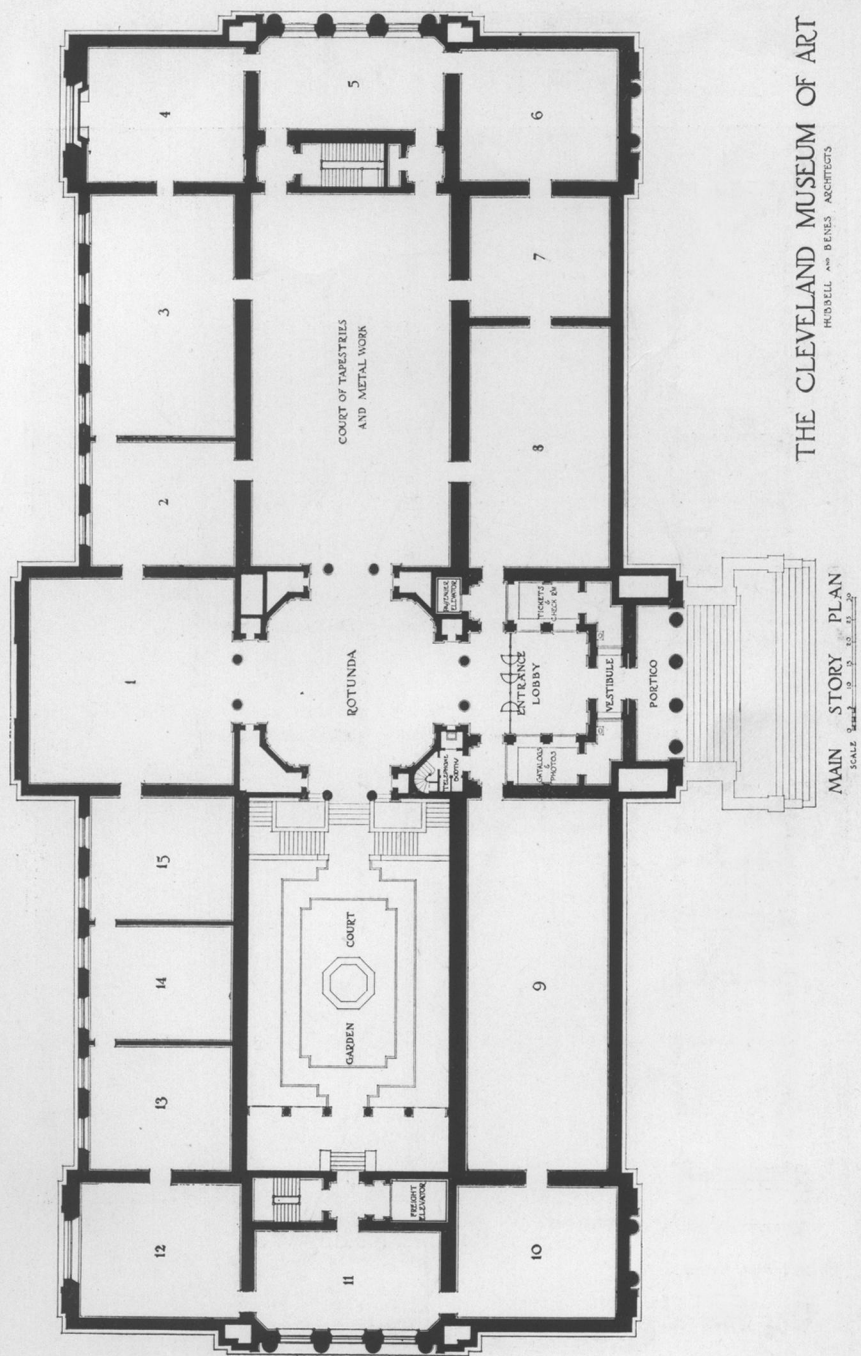
After the gravest, most prolonged and careful consideration, earnest study of what has been done elsewhere, and many exhaustive experiments, it was finally decided to follow the pres-



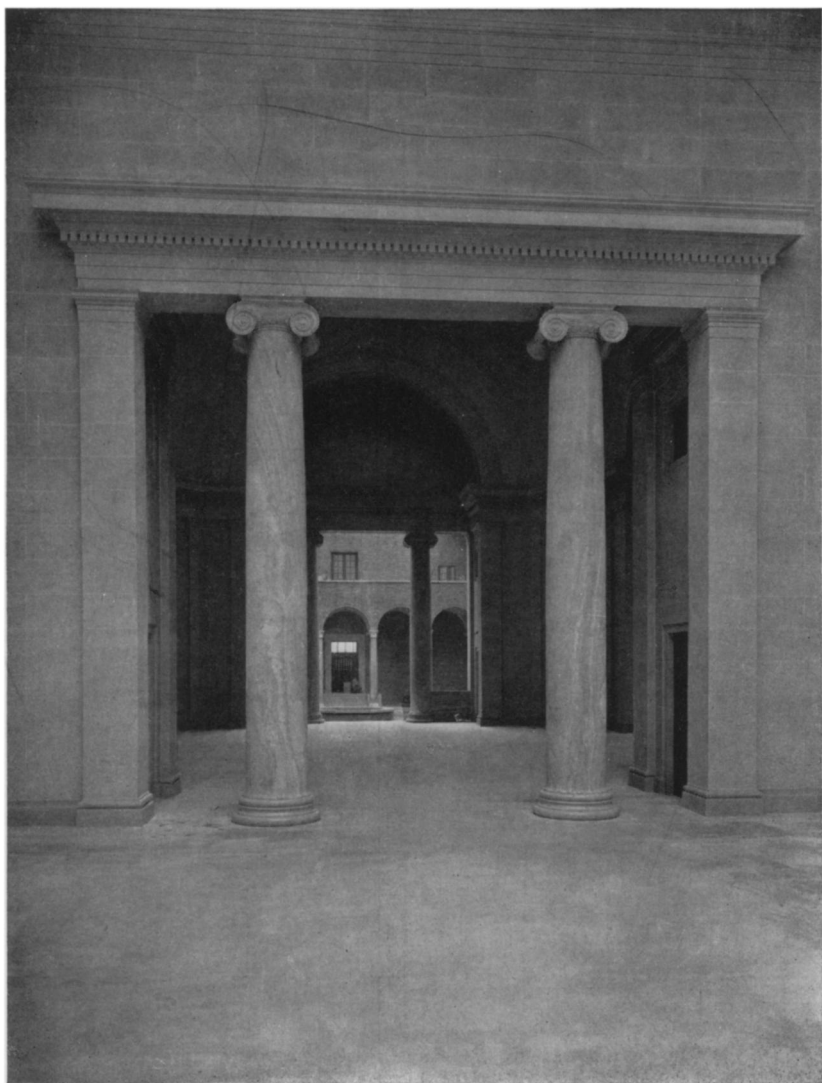
Staircase looking into the Rotunda

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

HUBBELL AND BENES ARCHITECTS



MAIN STORY PLAN
SCALE 9'-0" = 1"



View Across Rotunda looking West

ent scheme of carefully varied tones of grey, ranging from the greenish shade of the sandstone with which many of the halls are lined, to the warmer notes which predominate in some of the galleries. Exceptions have been made, for reasons which seemed good and sufficient to the Directorate, in the Italian room above described, and in the corresponding gallery at the opposite corner of the building on the north side, where the architectural treatment of the room devoted to the art of the Nearer East, together with the colourful character of the objects to be exhibited in it, seemed to admit a less sober colour scheme. We have little doubt that these departures will justify themselves to the sympathetic visitor.

From the gallery of Italian paintings we proceed to the Spanish and Dutch paintings, thence through the French and British schools to those of our native American school, which, founded originally on those of Europe, is beginning in many instances to emancipate itself from their leading-strings, and in its turn to set a pace for them.

We may now turn into the great eastern court round which the galleries we have just visited center. This is very properly treated in what may be called a more exterior and architectural manner; walled from floor to cornice with sandstone it presents a severe and dignified aspect which well befits its use as a gallery of Tapestries and Metals. In addition to tapestries it is intended to exhibit here a collection of arms and armour, with other wrought-iron and metal work.

We have now surveyed the eastern wing of the Museum, and find ourselves once more in the central rotunda. Passing through the Colonial hall again, we enter the western wing.

The first room we come to is devoted to the arts and civilization of ancient Egypt.

The two following rooms will contain the collections of Chinese and Japanese art, of which the Museum has already been so fortunate as to acquire some notable examples.

The last room of this series is the gallery of Near Eastern art, that is to say, of the Asiatic countries to the east of the Mediterranean, inclusive of the Arabian or Saracenic arts which spread westward along its southern shores and penetrated into Spain. With these, for the moment, will be shown examples of those East-Indian arts which were derived from Persia in the four-

teenth and subsequent centuries. The decoration of this room has already been spoken of.

Beyond this again are three galleries which it is proposed to use for the purposes of temporary loan exhibitions.

Passing through these and the entrance lobby we reach the rotunda once again and turning to the left descend a few steps into the garden court. We have more than once in our progress caught a glimpse of this delightful and unique feature of The Cleveland Museum of Art. It is walled with soft-toned brick and covered with an airy looking skylight suggesting a treillage. In the middle splashes a fountain, and all around the walls flowering shrubs and singing birds will at all seasons give the effect of southern out-of-doors. Here and there among the verdure it is intended to set examples of sculpture and such architectural subjects as would naturally seem more in place amid such surroundings than in the severer atmosphere of a gallery. Across the western end runs an arcade, carried on granite columns with white marble caps, which came from the now destroyed Torlonia palace in Rome. With no extravagant outlay and merely with the tasteful use of the simplest materials it is believed that an effect has been secured which will prove one of the most delightful to be found in any museum in the world.

THE SECOND STORY

It will easily be understood that in a building such as this, where the majority of the rooms are lit from the top by skylights, there is not a great deal of available space on the upper floor. Nevertheless, by taking thought, a certain amount of valuable room has been turned to account, which might otherwise have been wasted.

Three separate staircases and two elevators reach this floor, so that these rooms, though more or less isolated from one another, are yet rendered accessible from the main floor. Portions of the administrative department naturally found their way up here.

Since every object in the collections has to be photographed as soon as it is registered, an excellent studio for this purpose with dark- and printing-rooms will be found at the west end, adjacent to the freight elevator. Corresponding to it at the east end are a couple of rooms, one to be used as the office and library for the adjoining Children's Museum, and the other as a

studio where paintings which have suffered from age or other causes may be carefully overhauled, relined or repaired in case of need. There remain three admirable large rooms, two contrived over the ceilings of the north galleries, which it will be remembered are lit by windows and not by skylights, and one above the south vestibule and lobby. Those on the north side are 85 feet long by 33 feet wide. The one leading from the garden court balcony will be used for special, trade, or other more or less technical exhibits which are not of interest to all visitors to the galleries. In the other, at the head of the stairs leading from the educational section, it is planned to install a Children's Museum, where little people may find such matters as interest the more serious of them and study these at their ease without disturbing their elders by the excited prattle which is so necessary an expression of a child's eager interest. It is more than probable that the Directorate will not limit these objects of interest to works of art strictly so called, but that the works of nature may find a place there, too, and that so a nucleus may be formed of a Museum of Natural History, an institution at present lacking in Cleveland.

The third room, on the south, may possibly be utilized for a collection of architectural casts, and later, if it should prove advisable, as a classroom for certain classes contemplated in the Huntington bequest. While not so large as the other two, it is sufficiently spacious for any such purpose, well lit and most conveniently reached by a staircase and an elevator from the entrance lobby below.

A few words must be given to the housekeeping of the Museum; a side of the administration which, though of the most vital importance, can seldom if ever be allowed to obtrude upon public notice. The heat, lighting and power are all obtained from outside sources of supply, but the uses to which they are put, and the means whereby these results are obtained, are all part of the organization of the institution. No air is admitted to the galleries and store-rooms that has not been filtered, washed and raised or reduced to an even temperature; a more important factor than is generally realized in the proper care of works of art; this is done by two huge electrically driven fans. Having served its purpose it is withdrawn by another fan. The presence of dust having been, by these means, reduced to a minimum, that

minimum will be removed by a thoroughly complete vacuum-cleaner system. Before leaving the heating system it should be noted that an arrangement of steam-pipes makes it easy to melt any accumulation of snow or ice, not only on the glass roofs, but in the gutters and leaders; and a system of sprinklers delivers a spray on the outside of the skylights which will considerably temper the fiercest heats of summer and also simplify the cleaning of the glass. As a result the Museum of Art should prove one of the most popular summer resorts in the Middle West. Besides the "modern conveniences," certain precautionary appliances of the utmost value have been provided.

Electric light as supplied by public companies is naturally not infallible, and the risks of such a catastrophe as might occur on the sudden plunging of a crowded museum, containing collections of great value, into total darkness is not lightly to be contemplated. To guard against this a storage battery plant has been provided, controlled from at least three strategic points, so that the pushing of a button at any one of these would, in case of an accident to the normal lighting arrangements, at once furnish sufficient light to prevent a panic and safeguard the collections.

Certain portions of the building, as the receiving-room and the shop and the large box-storage in the basement, where a certain amount of combustible material must of necessity be handled, have been furnished with a complete sprinkler system of the most modern and approved fashion, and the doors of all stair-wells and of the entire service section are of steel. Elsewhere, as has been shown, the risk of fire is practically non-existent.

LIGHTING

The lighting of the galleries is the result of many months of experimenting on the part of a committee of experts, of which Dr. Edward P. Hyde, Director of the Nela Research Laboratory of the National Lamp Works, is chairman. While the committee was appointed too late to control the structure of the attic spaces, which created many difficulties, it has succeeded in solving the problem most successfully, and as a result of their labors The Cleveland Museum of Art will have the benefit of galleries in which their main objects have been achieved, i. e., rather dark floors not strongly lighted, so as to avoid the reflec-

tions, which are usually so annoying in a picture gallery; inconspicuous sub-skylights; all illumination, whether daylight or artificial, under perfect control and directed at will on any portion of the hanging area on the walls which may be selected.

These results are achieved by the use of a new form of metal louvers, which are hung in series close to the upper glass roof and are operated electrically from each gallery, as needed, giving complete control of the varying intensities of daylight at a minimum cost for operation and maintenance.

The artificial lighting is from units placed above the sub-skylights throwing the light from the same direction as the daylight, and largely on the walls, instead of mainly on the floor, as has been too frequently the case in the past.

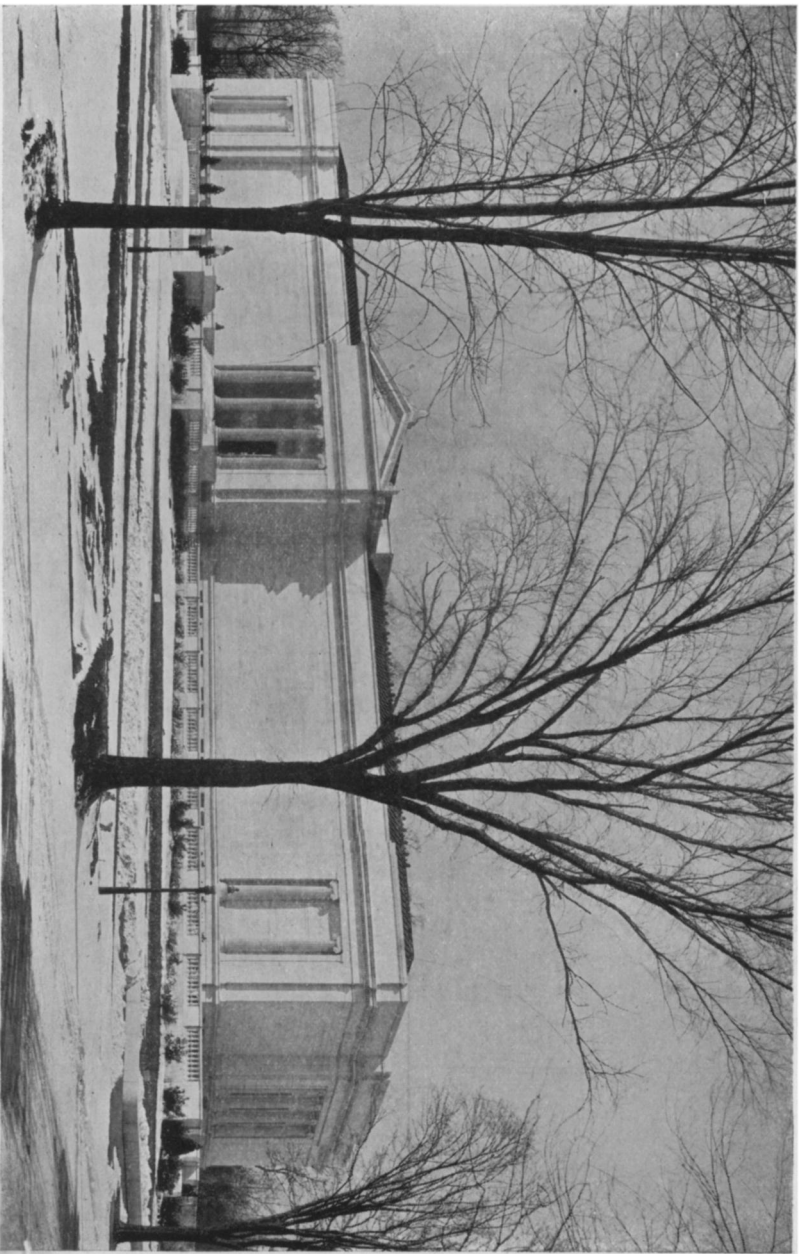
As the entire exhibition story is to be equipped with the new "daylight" lamps, visitors to The Cleveland Museum will have the unique opportunity of seeing works of art under light of uniform color at all times of day or night, a state of affairs the importance of which for the purpose of study or enjoyment is not easily to be overestimated.

MUSEUM HOURS

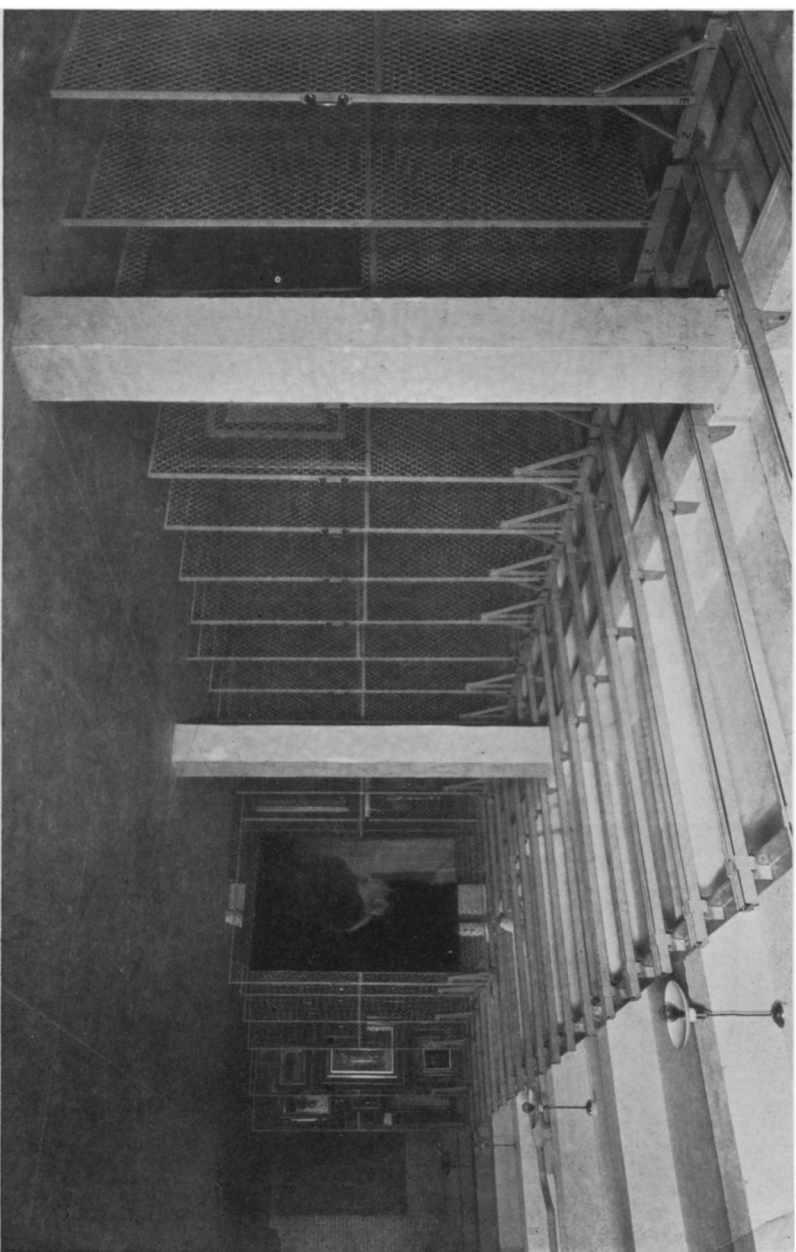
The Museum will be open daily from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. (Wednesday from 9 a. m. to 10 p. m.) and on Sunday from 1 p. m. to 10 p. m.

PAY DAYS: On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday an admission fee of 25 cents will be charged to all except members.

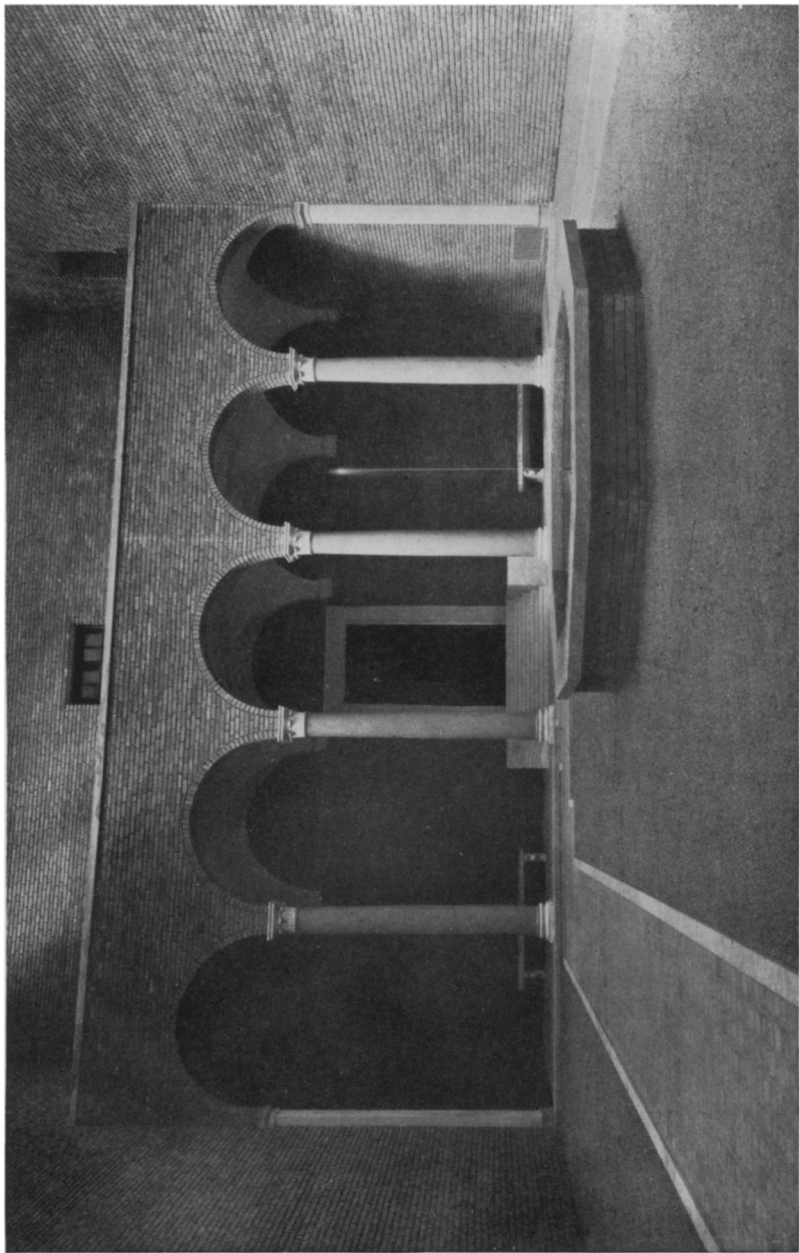
The Museum is closed on the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.



View of the Building, taken March, 1916



View of Main Storage



Loggia in the Garden Court